/39 cont./

755 Therefore, the Indians, scorning natural observation, go with blind faith to their piaches or enchanters, who are con-
000 sidered doctors or curers and never as priests. Pliny the Elder has already made note of and written: "No one doubts that magic was born from medicine. In primitive societies the magician was, above all, a physician." Very correctly did Proodt also write that "as primitive men attribute sickness to the action of a spirit, they are not content with the simple administration of infusions or powders."

757 The use of a few tisanes, purgatives, and emollients, of
177 a few shell poultices with more or less tannic acid (and as a result disinfectant), and the application of formic acid directly by means of the bite of ants or wasps, all of these almost certainly were learned from the Creoles. In any case this constitutes an exception in their medicinal regimen and in their mentality or means of conceiving of diseases and their remedies.

755 88. The typical way in which the Indians cure themselves is by means of the tarénmurú (charms or magic prayers) and the practices of the piaches, which are of the same sort. We might, perhaps, have a chance to return to the subject of these charms; for the time being let it suffice to say that they are "a short prayer addressed to a piá or pachí (trunk or head) of a certain animal, plant, or legendary being, possessor of qualities or power against the evil which it is desired to dispel, or with the ability to produce some good which is desired, or the vehicle of some disease which it is desired might enter into another." These words are pronounced over some receiving-transmitting object and in addition it is blown upon, not with the mouth but with the nose; this also gives rise to the name of blowing (tarén), which is given to the charms. These, as has been seen, can either be beneficial, tarem-bá, or maleficent, mui-má. /40/

000 89. For the greater clarity of what is herein said, I shall copy a Pemón charm and shall transcribe another Egyptian one,

/42 cont./

and vomiting and even fainting and paroxysms. It is exactly during one of these that the initiator must furtively deposit various small stones of more or less crystallized form among the vomit. These stones will henceforth be his iai or yachi (from which it is also possible that the name of the piaches may have been derived), a sort of amulet, in which are supposed to dwell hidden protective spirits, which will help them at dangerous or difficult times and in the solemn moments of tumayá or piachería.

In addition to beverages, some of them are treated by introducing through the nose and removing through the mouth strings impregnated with vegetable substances, to which they attribute magic properties or mysterious forces; they even go so far as to pass sharp grasses through (with the inevitable bleeding) for the purpose of obtaining a resonant and powerful voice. The piache must have a good voice, know the usual songs, and be able to assume different voices; this will be easier for him if he knows several languages, even though only a few words or phrases in them.

93. The piache's equipment consists of: the murei, or little bench with a figure, generally of a monkey, on which he sits to sing; the afore-mentioned yachí, or little stones; the kachiuotó, or special little bed for ingesting through the nose the juice of kumeré or tobacco leaves; the pipe, or tamuiyén, since they also make use of tobacco smoking, and finally, bundles of leaves of ayú or pirkavá instead of the maraca in general use in other tribes, which they employ to accompany the singing and to create various illusions.

94. The piache goes into a trance by ingesting through the nasal passages the above-mentioned beverages; he always works at night and in complete darkness and in a completely closed in place. Piaches make believe that their soul goes away from them and that with the magical force /43/ of the beverages, the tobacco smoke, and the noise of the leaves, it opens the doors of the hills where the maurí live, enters into

/43 cont./

787 conversation with them, discovers the cause of the illness,
755 takes away from them the spirit (energy, vigor, or health) which they had taken from the Indian, and returns it to the sick person, who should begin to improve.

756 There is no doubt that the piache is a subject of autosug-
787 gestion, an hallucinated person who believes in his own lies. In order to understand this better we must bear in mind that the ingestion of the said tisanes and others such as peyoth, meczal, yagé, miguarano, etc., produce not only inebriation, but also hallucinations and imaginative illuminations, even in distinct colors, by which some name these illusiogenic substances. And as the soul is for Indians with respect to the body, blood and vigor, and in with respect to the spiritual the interior eye or imaginative faculty, which is the most vigorous and vivid, the result is that he has the imaginative lucidity
[171] for spiritual illustration. These customs and beliefs have already been observed with regard to the Mexican Indians by López de Gómara, Pedro Mártir, and Lafitau, and other colonial writers.

755 95. It is necessary to have attended piachería seances --
787 I call them this because of their similarity to the seances of spiritualists-- in order to understand the bewitchment or hyponotization that can be produced in sick persons and even those who are not sick. Three or four times I managed to attend and I retain the memory of this grandiose and impressive aesthetic and psychological phenomenon; I still seem to hear the resonance of the various songs of the piache in the deep silence of the night and inside the round huts; I can still hear the cadence of the sheaves, which now would be rustling like a forest in a hurricane or now would sound like a grove of trees stirred by a gentle breeze; I can still hear the imitation of birds or animals, the remarkable imitation of noises that go off or come close, of spirits who went up or down, beating on the ground with force, of a multiplicity of persons who were conversing, and a thousand other things, some of which made one drowsy and others which made one's hair stand up.

/43 cont./

755 96. The piaches do not customarily work for a fixed price, but the Indians, according to their ability to pay and their gratitude and according to the good or bad results of the cure, make them gifts as they freely wish.

756 755 The piaches believe in the obligation to abstain from certain foodstuffs, principally on the day of and the night before they must perform.

755 787 In the cases I witnessed I did not see that the piaches were /44/ real ventriloquists or that they "were talking big," as the ancients would say; they only imitated in an ordinary way different voices, with the help of the hand and quickly changing posture and place. (Darkness was a help to me in following all their tricks and illusions, both in this and when they pretended to go up in the air and down again.)

755 97. All the Indians, to a greater or lesser degree, believe themselves capable of curing by means of charms and at the same time capable of producing evil effects; but naturally they believe the charms and magical blowings cast by the piaches are much more efficaceous and fearsome. Among the latter as well there are degrees; and they usually consider to be the wisest of those initiated in other tribes or coming from them. For this reason the piaches sometimes say that they can do nothing to cure certain diseases, because they have been caused by other piaches who live in distant regions and possess other secrets unknown by them.

755 756

538 756 98. In tales and legends, more than in real life, the Indians consider their piaches to be diviners and miracle workers. Thus for example, they attribute to Chirikavai or Apakavai: that he carved off human limbs and put them back on as one would put together and take apart a clock; that he turned his yachí and his pana-darí (dependents) into birds; that he was able to interpret their songs as if they were conversations of people; finally, that he ascended to the sky preceded by his nephew Marité (Scorpion) and that with his equipment and his limbs he created several constellations, among them Tamuekán,

/49 cont./

789 To this category belong among the Pemón Indians the practice [754] of injuring an enemy by charming his tracks; carrying water in [513] the mouth when planting cane and invoking the poppy so that [224] sleep will come to children; hunters making remedies with [252] leaves similar to the ears of some animal or other so that the [755] animal may come out to meet them; women pouring honey [787] into cuts on their jaws so that the chewed kachirí may turn out sweet for them; believing that eating eggs will bring out boils; believing that tripping over a stone on the path is a presage that we shall meet a traveler who is coming in the opposite [787] direction; interpreting dreams always through similarities, e.g. moriche seeds guáimaro, red kachirí for blood, the piache's song for sickness; and a thousand more which we shall not list for the sake of brevity. About this same matter, Cecil Dampier wrote: "The savage does not pray to God to send him sun or rain: he dances a dance to the sun or he croaks like a frog..., following an association of ideas."

Y. A. Bouyssonie observed that "red ocher makes one think of blood, the condition of life, and therefore is considered to be a sort of medium for conjuring death and for facilitating posthumous existence."

789 The same can be said of the use of annatto or achiote among these Indians against the oradán, maurí, and amariauk.

108. The second principle gives rise to the magical practices which are called contagious and also sympathetic. To 855 this type belong, among the Pemón Indians, the group of prac- 846 tices related to the couvade and the asarakpué, that is, having 789 to do with the birth of children and the death of our relatives. The practices and abstentions with reference to the couvade, which begin from the time of the pairing of the progenitors and continue in minuendo until the children are two or three years old, affect not only the father -- as is generally said in ethnographic treatises, but also the mother, and it is based on the belief that tiredness, sickness, /50/ malevolent influences, etc., of either of the progenitors affect -- and in a higher

/98 cont./

771 210. If we should allow ourselves to be guided by the afore-mentioned currents among those who study religions among the more primitive races, we would say that these aborigines were "worshipers of the natural forces"; but through intimate knowledge of their ideas, I can only say that they are invokers or conjurers of them.

Although it might be with a certain redundancy, I wish to insist still upon explaining what it is that the Pemón Indians understand by these potorí or piá, which form one of the bases of that suprasensible world, and why they invoke them. I believe that by availing myself of some examples, I shall be able to explain this matter.

825 a) The Indians observe, for example, that the wild pig,
789 or váquiro, is not poisoned by eating bitter or poisonous yucca;
● 955 from this they deduce that the progenitor or first father of the váquiros endowed all of his descendants with a singular force: consequently, when there does occur a chance poisoning due to the ingestion of bitter yucca, they invoke or conjure the piyinké potorí, without thereby believing themselves dependent upon it or inferior to it in other cases.

b) The Indians observe that mice, acures, and other rodents always have hard feces; from this they deduce that their progenitors endowed them with an immunity to intestinal decompositions, diarrhea, etc.: consequently, when they find themselves afflicted with or complaining of these ills, they charm their beverages by invoking the potorí of the afore-mentioned rodents.

825 c) The Indians observe that the araguato /American
789 monkey/, despite being a relatively small animal, has a loud voice; thus when they get hoarse or, besides this, whenever they wish to obtain a powerful and sonorous voice, they invoke the father of the araguatos.

789 d) The Indians observe that sand and ashes absorb a large
755 quantity of water or any other liquid; thus when they wish to

789 /98 cont./
755 stop hemorrhages or discharges of any sort, they invoke the piá or pachí, let's call them the mother of ashes and sand, which are driers.

[821] e) Indians observe that when the wind blows, it moves away the clouds and the sky becomes clear; thus they invoke the big wind, the father of the wind, when their vision is clouded. /99/

No less than a hundred examples like these could be presented of beneficent charms, to obtain good things or health, or maleficent ones, to produce evils to enemies; but I believe that those here noted are sufficient.

800 211. From this cursory exposition which we have just made of the religion of the Pemón, it can clearly be deduced how deeply in error are those who believe that in order to teach them our Christian religion we must forcibly enter into their soul casting devils from it as one casts down idols from an altar; nothing of the sort, all we need do is get out of their heads the anthromorphization of natural forces and the magical invocation of the same in order to substitute for them the true physical concept of things and their qualities and the true application or appropriation of the same by means of medicine, whether it be by external application or by ingestion.

Nor need we make any great effort to eliminate these ideas, which can remain as adornments or threads to be used in the flowery work of the imagination, always so long as upon them we can place the true rational and Christian theology of a Creator and Savior God of all things, especially of man; the future life, not of fantasy and conjecture, but a real and eternal place after the terrestrial and temporally ephemeral one, and different, depending upon the actions taken here below, and above all things, God's love for us and that we must profess Him, and the love of charity which must always reign among all men on earth.

756 unknown to any of my informants and the piaches themselves are quite unapproachable on the subject.[173]

756 776 [787] Piaimá, a supernatural being or spirit, is said to have initiated the first piaches into their mysteries by exactly the same procedure that I have described for the earthly piache's initiation of an apprentice. He is also said now to be corporeally visible to a piache (but to no one else) and to converse with and advise the piaches. Although I lack specific information on the point, it therefore seems highly probable that the initiation involves the invocation of Piaimá and that some, at least, of the various curative procedures also involve his presence and co-operation. However this may be, it is definite that the piaches are in rapport with Piaimá and that he is for them co-operative in some degree but that for other Indians and without the intervention of a piache he is exceedingly dangerous and may appear in the guise of a savage killer. He is thus essentially evil, a devil in fact, and the piaches derive much of their power through personal acquaintance with this devil and through their ability to temper his wrath or to direct his activities into desirable channels.

The Theory of Disease.

753 Although I shall not go into detail on this subject, the Kamarakoto theory of disease is so inextricably linked with magic and religion that it must be briefly summarized. It is not now true of the Kamarakotos, as has been stated for various Indian tribes, and probably was never true that they considered quite all ailments to be supernatural in origin. The manifest relationship between insect and snake bites and their immediate effects (but of course excluding malaria and other secondary effects) is naturally recognized. All swellings and ulcers are ascribed to such causes, even when this is not correct. It is not clear to me whether an ulcer, for instance, is supposed to be due to an actual bite, unnoticed at the time, or to the bite of a supernatural insect or snake. Although there is no clear recognition of their cause, colds, constipation, indigestion, and the like (but not the fever that may arise from these) are also now considered usually to have natural causes, although in this case one cannot be [755] sure that such an opinion is not relatively recent. For these ailments believed to be natural in origin spiritual remedies may nevertheless be applied, such as [757] remedial dancing for ulcers. Physical remedies, including various herbs and infusions, are, however, in common use for them and this purely medical subject is outside the scope of my report.

Diseases for which there is no obvious physical cause, particularly fevers [754] of any sort, are considered to be wholly supernatural in origin. These are usually caused by kanaimaton (plural; singular — kanaima).

173 [see footnote on p. 328, category 116 — Analyst]

754 all, in human guise, are recognized as being supernatural beings and not really
776 human. Others are spirits that can materialize in almost any form, and still others are wholly invisible and formless supernatural beings or even represent a supernatural influence that is hardly thought of as possessing individuality or personality. Even these indefinite distinctions hardly seem to be very clear-
771 ly present in the Indian mind. In a broader sense, kanaima is the evil princi-
778 ple of the universe and its manifestations are endlessly protean and essentially indefinable, an idea approaching the Polynesian mana (see Karsten's discussion, which, however, does not include an explicit understanding of more specific aspects of Carib kanaima).

778 Anything unexpected, a noise, a light, a branch falling, an unusual bird,
781 a sudden shadow, may be greeted with the cry of "kanaima," a word that is
822 heard constantly on Indian lips, both jokingly and fearfully. In general anything that startles them and that is not immediately explicable by some normal and expected cause is kanaima, and this is obviously related to their real fear of being startled and to their efforts to avoid startling others.

778 Even this does not exhaust the aspects of kanaima, for it includes true
754 spirit-possession. Kanaima, or a kanaima, may enter the body of a victim and remain there, notably in the chest, causing fever and eventual death unless exorcized.

● 755 This spirit-possession is essentially related to the duties of the piache in averting the effects of kanaimaton, for medically his most important role is that of exorcist. Fortunately no case occurred during our stay, but the general
[274] procedure was reliably outlined to me by Indian eye-witnesses. The piache makes an infusion of green tobacco in water and snuffs this until he is thoroughly "drunk." He then gives a great leap into the air and disappears. Informants have no idea where he goes, but this is always done inside a house at night with the fires low or extinguished, and one can assume that he somehow climbs in-
[352] to the rafters. After a time he reappears and sits on his bench. This bench,
[532] called murei, is unlike the ordinary bench, aponoi', being higher and carved into animal form (Fig. 76). He holds in his hands sticks and rolls of leaves and beats time on the ground with these while he sings.[174] Soon the piache is surrounded by a ring of light. My witnesses said that this was not visible to them but only to the piache, who presumably told them that it was there. Then the kanaima appears standing on the chest of his victim and is also visible only to the piache, who asks the kanaima to abandon his prey. The kanaima's reply is told to the sufferer and if it is affirmative recovery follows within two days. If it is negative, the patient inevitably dies.

754 The Kamarakotos believe that kanaimaton have now been fairly well cleared out around Kamarata by the piaches, but that some still invade the
[824] region and that they are still common in the Gran Sabana. The favorite haunts
[361] of kanaimaton, at least around Kamarata, are the forests and this is the

174 [see footnote on p. 328, category 116 - Analyst]

754 and the boy returned, took to his hammock, developed a high fever, and was
[797] at death's door when he was finally saved by the priest's confessing his fault to
[128] the boy and withdrawing the kanaima influence. I personally did not witness such a case, but some of the cases of illness related to me by the Indians appeared to involve no possible physical cause and the statements of reliable non-Indian witnesses, traveling both among the Kamarakotos and among several allied tribes, leave no doubt that such cases do really occur.[175]

Other Medical and Similar Magic.

●755 Although the piache is the magician and the physician, the use of magic is not entirely confined to him. There are some spells, not the exclusive property of the piache, that can be recited by the victim and by his friends, although these apparently are not considered really effective in severe cases or cases surely involving a kanaima. Koch-Grünberg gives the texts of several such spells from the Taurepánes. Some of them are related to birth, puberty, and other critical physical events and they constitute a simple sort of medical ceremonial which has magical implications but which cannot really be called religious. The idea of invocation of supernatural beings, an essentially religious aspect that is present in the activities of the piaches, is very attenuated or quite absent in these.

755 There are also medical dances which are analogous to these simpler
535 spells and are called generically eremba. The most common is the okõyima-eremba, "big snake medicine-dance," which is effective against real bites and against ulcers, which are theoretically believed to be bites. No special costume is worn except bead necklaces and unlike social dances the men and women dance in separate groups. The dance begins at dusk and continues until the following dawn.

756 There is also a piache's dance, called mari, which is danced by every-
535 one but led by a piache who sings and shouts. I could learn of no special religious significance for this dance but its ascription to the piache (whereas ordinary social dances are led by the cacique or any competent to'-esa') suggests that it must have had some such particular significance originally.

535 It is probable that most dances once had some magic significance if they
[789] did not definitely arise as magic or religious ceremonials. Thus the parichara
[533] songs given elsewhere are in effect quite typical hunting spells. The present-
[224] day Kamarakotos, however, informed me that the dances (excepting the eremba, of course) have for them absolutely no utilitarian, magical, or religious significance and that they are danced solely for pleasure. Certainly they are not treated as anything mystical and show no trace of true ritualism.

224 Aside from medicine, magic does not figure to any great extent in Kama-
[789] rakoto life but there is some hunting magic. Typical hunting magic with a

175 [See footnote on p. 328, category 116 - Analyst]

435 172. The literature, especially that of travel as opposed to scientific study, is full of ridicule of the Indians because they do not know the intrinsic worth of articles. These statements are usually naive because they show that it is the traveler, who did not know what "intrinsic worth" means. Except for jewelry and a few other uses unknown to the Indians, gold has no intrinsic worth. In our civilization, but not that of the Indians, it has an extrinsic worth as a token of the real value that it in itself does not intrinsically have. When an Indian picks up a nugget and trades it for a needle, he gets by far the best of the bargain on the basis of intrinsic worth: he gets something that he could not make and that is of great use to him for something that cost him no real work and that is worthless to him, and so gets something for nothing. It must not be supposed, however, that there are any Indians left, even beyond the limits of intensive exploration, who do not now have a better idea than this of the value (to the traveler) of gold, or of other articles of regular trade.

114 766 173. Koch-Grünberg, who seems to have penetrated farther than anyone else into Carib religion, gives the texts of several Taurepán magic spells, but these were apparently common property and not exclusive to the piaches.

114 534 755 [171] 174. No mention was ever made of the use of a rattle, maraka, by the piache and since this is almost universal and is indeed believed by some to be the primary purpose of the maraka, I feared that I had missed an essential point. I now learn, however, on Koch-Grünberg's unimpeachable authority that Taurepán piaches do not use the maraka, and this must be true also of the Kamarakotos.

754 123 175. The following remarkable incident was related to me by Marie Angel as having occurred during her previous visit to the tribe. One of the boys employed at the camp was seized by a kanaima and retired to his hammock to die. All entreaties to him fell on deaf ears and Mrs. Angel finally said in his presence, through an interpreter, that if he was going to die anyway she was not going to have him do so at length in her camp, that she was going to get a gun and if he was still in his hammock when she returned, she would put him out of his misery. When she approached with the gun, the boy suddenly sprang from the hammock and ran off, entirely cured. Since Indians do certainly die from such attacks, this anecdote is not to be taken as evidence that they are feigned.

764 123 176. But I did not open these because this would certainly have been resented and the friendship of the living was far more essential to my work than this slight additional knowledge of the dead.